

Wednesday, August 25, 2021

50 years and still brooming! Arcola's Broomcorn Festival coming in Sept.

The 50th annual Arcola Broomcorn Festival sponsored by the Arcola Chamber of Commerce continues with its successful mix of free family fun. This year's festival is excited to be bringing back many food booths, arts and craft booths and street vendors. The reining "Best Festival in East Central Illinois" (News-Gazette reader's poll) will be packed with FUN! The festival, that starts Friday, Sept 10 and continues thru Sunday the 12th is located downtown Arcola, among our historic buildings, colorful murals, and public outdoor art displays.



On Friday, after the festival opens at 10 a.m., Corky & BillieJean Clark will be honored as Parade Grand Marshall at 3 p.m., the National Broom Sweeping Contest is held at 4, and the winners of the National Craft Broom Contest will be announced. The festival has carnival rides and an amazing broom tent where you can see live broom making

demonstrations. Also at 4, the beer pavilion opens. BIG Bufords will be serving up food and cold beverages under the pavilion.

Saturday starts off with the 43rd annual 5K and 10K race and 5K recreational walk - The ABC 10,000. As you stroll the vendors on Saturday you will also be able to take a tethered hot air balloon ride. Thank you to Coles Moultrie Electric Coop for sponsoring the balloon! The free family festival continues Saturday afternoon with our huge parade at 3 p.m. As always, Arcola's own World-Famous Lawn Rangers will be making their Broom Corn Festival parade appearance along with some of your favorite movie cars. Line up to see vehicles from movies such as Jurassic Park, Ghostbusters, Back to the Future, Knight Rider and The Blues Brothers.

Sunday kicks off with the First Christian Church outdoor church service at 10 a.m. in their parking lot fol-

lowed by free outdoor Christian music entertainment. Get ready to sing along with The Rockin' Chair on Sunday at 2 p.m. This St. Louis based band is known for keeping great music alive! This free concert is located on the Oak St Stage. The Rockin' Chair plays all your favorites from bands like The Eagles, Crosby Stills and Nash, Jackson Brown and The Doobie Brothers. Also, Arcola Jaycees will have a kiddie tractor pull starting at 11 a.m. Beer Pavilion will open at noon. The food and craft booths close at 5 p.m. Sunday.

Grab your broom-mate and join the fun!
 Follow Arcola Chamber on Facebook for the most up to date information.
 Please check the Arcola Chamber of Commerce website for further details - arcolachamber.com or call the Arcola Chamber at 217-268-4530 or email staff@arcolachamber.com for info.



Large sunflower field just off of Route 36 outside of Tuscola, Illinois.

Photo: Kendra Hennis

LyondellBasell announces Oct. close of Route 36 ethanol plant in Tuscola

By Kendra Hennis
 Employees of LyondellBasell were told on Friday, August 13 that the ethanol production plant in Tuscola will shut down permanently later this year due to poor market conditions.

many people will be necessary in each of the different phases"

"This decision was not taken lightly," she added. "We have an incredible team of hardworking, dedicated people at our Tuscola plant who have safely and successfully maintained the last remaining synthetic-ethanol business in North America. Unfortunately, the synthetic-ethanol market has been deteriorating for some time, and these declining market conditions make operating this business long-term financially unviable."

Borchers noted that the

company expects to stop producing ethanol by Oct. 31. She also added that employees will be offered positions at other LyondellBasell holdings along with separation benefits and support, and that the company was working with union representatives where applicable.

USI (later LyondellBasell) began talks of coming to Tuscola in June of 1951; and hired their first employee in July of 1951. The plant has had a huge impact on the community for years, with a 15 percent increase of residents to Douglas County from the plant beginning in the '60's.

Numerous residents have had family who worked in the plant, and many worked there themselves. I remember my first visit being to a summer science camp held. It is truly a place that has made a large mark on Tuscola, and it will be deeply missed.

Brian Moody, director of Tuscola Chamber & Economic Development Inc. noted that the news was disappointing and emotional for the Douglas County community, which has been home to a chemical plant at the Route 36 location just west of town for more than 50 years.

"Our first concern is with

the employees and their families over the uncertainty they are experiencing," Moody said. "We will now direct our focus to supporting the impacted employees by bringing resources and services to help them as they search for new career opportunities."

"We recognize the positive impact the facility has had on our local economy for over half a century," he added. "We know the value which has been added to our region and the role this facility has played in building our community. Thousands of lives have benefited from the operations here. We have

had a long, positive relationship with this facility and its employees. We want to recognize the people who built, maintained and safely operated the complex over these many years."

Moody also noted that the Chamber & Economic Development and Douglas County Regional Workplace Center will do what it can to help LyondellBasell employees find other work while trying to find other businesses for Douglas County.



Photo: Stephanie Wierman

LyondellBasell announced that they would be closing their Tuscola plant in October this year due to poor market conditions in the synthetic ethanol business.



Submitted Photo

USI (later LyondellBasell) pictured in 1961.

Visit Downtown Mattoon Dine in Restaurants

- Bimini Café - Little Mexico – Thai Noodle & Sushi – Luigi's Italian
- Hunan Fine Asian Cuisine – Downtown Diner – Burger King